

## Book Notes

**Orlans, Barbara R., Beauchamp, Tom L., Dresser, Rebecca, Morton, David B. and Gluck, John, P.,** *The Human Use of Animals: Case Studies in Ethical Choice*, xi + 330 pp., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998.

*The Human Use of animals* is mainly a collection of case studies which raise ethical issues concerning the use of animals in biomedical research, cosmetic safety testing, behavioural research, wildlife research, education, food and farming. It also covers the use of animals as companions and for religious rites. Biomedical and behavioural research receive the fullest coverage. The authors try to expose the strength of argument on both sides. Sometimes this is a little strained as in the discussion of head trauma studies using baboons. Also most of these issues deserve to be treated in a broader framework where the possibility of using alternatives to animals (or not pursuing the research or life style at all) is treated more seriously. Nevertheless the authors do succeed in admirably laying out some of the complexities of the debates over the use of animals.

**Skutch, Alexander F.,** *The Minds of Birds*, xvi + 183pp., Texas A & M University Press, College Station, Texas, 1996.

In reports of his detailed observations of birds over many years, Skutch argues that their mental capacities have been grossly underestimated. In particular Skutch emphasises the capacity of birds to recognize other birds and humans. They have good memories and anticipate the future. They cooperate well, especially when breeding. They are affectionate and playful. They can be taught to count, and have a good sense of time. Some use tools. They appear to have an aesthetic sense, can dissimulate (for instance to protect their young). Skutch claims that this demands 'cool calculation and quick wits'. Pepperberg's remarkable findings with the African Grey Parrot are outlined. This is a beautifully written book, full of fascinating detail with a comprehensive bibliography on the abilities of birds.

**Russon, Anne, Bard, Kim A., Parker, Sue Taylor, eds., *Reaching into thought : The minds of the great apes*, xii + 464pp., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.**

*Reaching into Thought* contains 19 articles from psychologists and anthropologists on the mental abilities of the great apes and monkeys. Some classic studies are here, for instance Tetsuro Matsuzawa and Gen Yamakoshi's comparison of chimpanzee material culture between Bossou and Nimba, West Africa and Christophe Boesch's summation of the evidence gathered from the wild supporting the notion of a culture in chimpanzees. The collection also contains one of the best philosophical articles on what self-awareness or self-knowledge might consist in when considering humans, apes and monkeys. Other articles take up issues such as tool use, imitation, pretence and chimpanzees use of rules. This book is a serious challenge to anyone denying the capacity of great apes to think.

**Mech, L. David, Adams, Layne G., Meier, Thomas J., Burch, John W. and Dale, Bruce W., *The Wolves of Denali*, x + 238pp., University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1998.**

Denali is a National Park in Alaska and the wolves there form one of the largest protected populations in the world. Mech and his team have been studying these wolves for nine years and *The Wolves of Denali* presents the results from research in 1986 to 1994 in a detailed yet accessible manner. The findings give an excellent basis for thinking about issues such as the reintroduction of wolves into national parks in the United States, the effect of wolves on prey populations such as caribou in Alaska, the value of national parks to animals, the social relationships between wolves and their intelligence.